

Jesse Juen
U.S. Bureau of Land Management
New Mexico State Office
P.O. Box 27115
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

August 10, 2014

Dear Director Juen,

My name is Sara Lister and I am writing to protest the proposed sales of parcels NM-201410-001, 004 through 015 that will be offered up for lease in the BLM Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale, October 22, 2014. I am joined in this protest by my husband, Charles Lister, and by a fellow docent at the O'Keeffe Museum, Jan Denton.

Interest in Protesting

We have discovered that extensive oil drilling and fracking are taking place near the Black Place in northwestern New Mexico. The Black Place was Georgia O'Keeffe's name for the unique, barren and beautiful landscape which she visited and painted many times from the late 1930s into the 1940s. We hiked into the Black Place a few years ago to find the exact spots where O'Keeffe had camped and completed what are arguably some of the finest landscape paintings ever done by an American artist. This area is unique and historically very important.

Reasons for Protesting

We understand that access to the site is already severely limited. More drilling and fracking will inevitably damage the unique rock formations that exist, as far as we know, only in part of Rio Arriba County. This is a unique area of New Mexico with important connections to our most famous artist, Georgia O'Keeffe. Fracking is extraordinarily dangerous for fragile hills, which could easily be destroyed if, for example, there should be an earthquake.

Statement of Reasons

A finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the October 22, 2014 Oil and Gas Lease Sale is not adequately supported by the Environmental Assessment as it now stands. The fragile geology of this area has not been

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sufficiently studied in connection with fracking. We do know that the Black Place is irreplaceable.

In closing, we reiterate that the Black Place and related sites are vitally important to the future of New Mexico and the tourism that brings so many dollars to our community. We must protect this historic site. We understand that lease of the remaining parcels can be deferred until further studies are done.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,



Sara (and Charles) Lister

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Jan Denton

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